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LIKE AS TWO P'S.

A COMEDY

IN

FOUR ACTS,

BY

JOHN WAYGOOD.

LIKE AS TWO P'S

Timkins

Simkins

Dr. Pills

Dr. Crackbrain

Dr. Goneup

Dr. Looney

Porter

Inspector

Mrs. Timkins

Mrs. Alljoy (In love with Timkins, but accepts Simkins.)

Susan ... /

Policemen, Attendants, &c.

Dras

Mrs.

Tim.

Mrs.

Tim.

Mrs.

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Mrs.

Tim.

SCENE I.

Drawing-room in TIMKINS'S House. Mr. and Mrs. TIMKINS discovered.

Mrs. Timkins—Timkins, my dear, you are far from well. Now, now! you need not deny it. You cannot deceive me. I have been observing you very closely of late.

Timkins (aside)—The deuce you have! I wonder if she suspects——

Mrs. Timkins—Oh, no! Timkins, you are far from well.

Timkins—Never was better in my life. Have you any particular reason, Mrs. T., that I should be sick? Now, out with it! Tell the truth and shame the——ahem!

Mrs. Timkins—Timkins, are you mad?

Timkins—No, Mrs. T., I am not mad. (*Aside.*) But I soon shall be if this sort of thing continues.

Mrs. Timkins—Ah! I see. I fear it is a mental rather than bodily ailment with you. (*Timkins starts.*) Dear Timkins, why will you not tell your own wife what is the matter with you?

Timkins—Matter! why nothing is the matter with me, I tell you. (*Aside*) Oh, Jupiter! if she only knew the truth.

Mrs. Timkins—Well, dear Timkins, since you will not confide your troubles to me—because, of course, there is no use denying you are in trouble.

Timkins (excitedly)—Trouble! Who told you? Who said so? Who said I was in trouble, Mrs. Timkins?

Mrs. Timkins—My dear, if you go on in this absurd manner, I will certainly think you have lost your senses.

Timkins (aside)—Oh, great guns! I thought she was going to say “lost your money”; it would have been nearer the mark.

Mrs. Timkins—Now, don't interrupt again, Timkins, until I have finished.

Timkins (aside and in despair)—Great guns! when will she stop?

Mrs. Timkins—In the first place, my dear Timkins, you require change of air ; you must go into the country. Take a holiday ; it will do you good. Go to the North, go to Wales, go to Brighton, go anywhere ; but don't stay here moping, or you will certainly be laid up.

Timkins (aside)—There, now ! There's feminine energy for you ! But what's her motive ? Why does she want me away ? What's up, I'd like to know ? (*Aloud*) *Mrs. Timkins*, have you any particular reason for wishing me away. Now, out with it ? Tell the truth and shame the—ahem !

Mrs. Timkins (aside)—I declare the man is certainly mad. (*Aloud*) *Mr. Timkins*, you forget yourself.

Timkins—No rival Timkins—eh, *Mrs. T.* ?

Mrs. Timkins—Timkins ! !

Timkins—Quite sure ?

Mrs. Timkins—I will not endure this. I'll leave the room. To be insulted, and by my own husband, too. (*Walks towards the door.*)

Timkins—Don't go, *Maria*. I apologise. I'll go to the country to please you.

Mrs. Timkins (returning)—It is not for my pleasure, but your good. Ah ! *Timkins*, if you could only see yourself as others do.

Timkins (aside)—If we all could. (*Aloud*) Ah, well ! *Maria*. I'll go. I'll start at once. I'll take the first train.

Mrs. Timkins—Where to, *Timkins* ?

Timkins—Anywhere—that is where you told me to go to—ta ! ta ! *Maria (kisses Mrs. T.)* ; I'll let you know when I get there.

Mrs. Timkins (holding up her hands) (aside)—Bless me ! I fear there is no hope for him.

Timkins (aside)—By Jove, I'll take her at her word ! I'll go—*Timkins*, my boy ; you and I will have a lark—a regular time of it. I'll drown dull care, and if I don't I'll drown myself. (*Aloud*) Ta ! ta ! *Maria*. (*Exit laughing.*)

Mrs. Timkins—Poor *Timkins* !

Enter SUSAN.

Susan—The doctor's come, ma'am.

Mrs. Timkins—Very well, *Susan* ; I will see him here—but stay, *Susan* ; your master is going away for a few days—go to him, see that his valise is properly packed, that he has everything for his comfort ; but above all things do not let him enter this room while the doctor is present without first acquainting me. I am consulting *Dr. Pills* about my husband's state of health.

Susan (aside, holding up her hands)—Poor master ! (*Exit.*)

Mrs. Timkins—Timkins has a strange aversion to Dr. Pills. It would be most unfortunate if the two were to meet at this time, especially in Timkins' present state of mind ; but I have great faith in Susan's judgment.

Enter SUSAN, ushering in DR. PILLS.

Susan—The doctor, ma'am.

Mrs. Timkins (*rising and shaking Dr. Pills by the hand*)—Ah ! doctor, it is very kind of you to be so punctual.

Dr. Pills—Always am punctual, madam (*takes his note-book out and makes a memo.*) (*Aside*) Five guineas—important consultation !

Mrs. Timkins—Susan, you may go.

Susan (*aside*)—If master only knew that *he* (*pointing to Dr. Pills*) was here, wouldn't there be dixie. (*Exit.*) (*Mrs. T. and Dr. P. seat themselves close to each other.*)

Mrs. Timkins—Doctor, it is very good of you to come, you are so punctual—so considerate !

Dr. Pills—Don't mention it, madam. (*Aside*) Sorry now I didn't make it ten guineas—think I will (*pulls out pocket book and makes memo.*).

Mrs. Timkins—It is about my poor husband I wish to consult you.

Dr. Pills—Ah ! a bad one altogether.

Mrs. Timkins—Doctor !!

Dr. Pills—I mean, a bad case. (*Aside*) A hard case.

Mrs. Timkins—Oh ! doctor, you cannot mean what you say ? Have you, then, observed poor Timkins' strange conduct of late ?

Dr. Pills—I never knew his conduct to be anything else but strange.

Mrs. Timkins—Ah, I fear you are prejudiced ; you don't like my husband.

Dr. Pills—Madam, you forget perhaps how on one occasion he applied the toe of his boot to—ah ! but such things are painful—to relate.

Mrs. Timkins—Professionally, doctor, you should forget such incidents.

Dr. Pills—Professionally I do, madam (*takes his note-book out and looks at it*) ; physically I cannot.

Mrs. Timkins—Well ! well ! doctor, forget the past, and only remember that I, a poor troubled wife, apply to you for advice and assistance. I am, I assure you, in a distressed state of mind.

Dr. Pills—My dear madam, I am your humble servant.

Mrs. Timkins—I have persuaded Timkins to go to the country for a week, in order that I may consult you quietly as to his state of health. For some time past he has been very strange in his manner ; talks in his sleep, walks up and down muttering to himself, knocks his hat over his eyes, has destroyed no less than a dozen hats in a fortnight, and altogether behaves himself so strangely that I have become alarmed. What if he were going

mad? What if some night a frenzy should seize him, and, while I am calmly sleeping by his side, he should cut my throat?

Dr. Pills—Send for me, madam. Such matters are peculiarly in my line.

Mrs. Timkins—Thank you, Doctor. I thought you were peculiarly a family physician.

Dr. Pills—So I am, madam; but you must remember that lunacy and its consequences are now peculiarly family disorders.

Mrs. Timkins—Oh, dear! this is dreadful! What am I to do? I send for you, thinking you would comfort and assist me, and you alarm me the more. How can I know whether Timkins is mad?

Dr. Pills—That depends entirely upon yourself.

Mrs. Timkins—How can that be, doctor?

Dr. Pills—Because in such matters the wishes of relatives and interested friends are consulted above all other considerations.

Mrs. Timkins—I do not understand you.

Dr. Pills—Let me explain the matter more clearly. If, in your opinion, there is a danger that your husband may, while you are calmly sleeping by his side, cut your throat, then there is no difficulty in obtaining the certificate of a couple of my professional friends to his lunacy, and we can have him conveyed to a place where he'll t : nobody but his keeper. If, however, you think you can c sleep by his side without getting your throat cut, then I do not see the necessity for troubling my friends.

Mrs. Timkins—But, doctor, his lunacy may be of a harmless description.

Dr. Pills—That is for you to decide.

Enter SUSAN excitedly.

Susan—Oh, mistress! master is in a dreadful rage—he banged me out of the room and said he was coming down here to have me dismissed. Oh, dear!

Dr. Pills—Madam—

Mrs. Timkins—Susan, I fear you have been indiscreet; leave the room.

(Exit Susan holding her handkerchief to her eyes.)

Dr. Pills—Madam, I understood you to say that your husband had gone to the country.

Mrs. Timkins—I certainly thought so.

Dr. Pills—But it appears he hasn't. And what am I to do?

Mrs. Timkins (perplexed)—It is very unfortunate! *(Brightening)* But stay—an excellent idea—a splendid opportunity! You will hear Timkins—you will be able to judge for yourself. You will go behind this screen.

Leads him towards screen.)

Dr. Pills (expostulating and holding back)—But, madam! madam! suppose Timkins should, in his frenzy, knock the screen over and discover me—what then?

Mrs. Timkins (pushing him forward)—Trust to me, doctor; I will protect you.

Dr. Pills—The deuce you will! I thought you invited me here to protect you. *(Goes behind screen).*

(Exit MRS. TIMKINS by one door.)

Enter TIMKINS by another door.

Timkins (in a rage)—Maria, I will not submit to this; confound it, madam! *(Looks about.)* Why, where the deuce is Mrs. Timkins?

Dr. Pills (Getting on a chair and looking over screen.) That wretched woman has gone, and left me at the mercy of this madman!

Timkins—Bolted! afraid to meet me. Ah! *(thumbs in waistcoat-holes)* not content with persuading me to go away, she must send her maid to pack my valise, the hussy!

Enter MRS. TIMPKINS.

Mrs. Timkins—Timkins!! The hussy!

Timkins—Not you, Maria. I referred to Susan.

Mrs. Timkins—And, pray, what has Susan been doing?

Timkins—Rummaging my things; insisting upon this when I wanted that; said you sent her to pack my valise. Maria, have you any particular reason for sending Susan to my dressing-room? Are you aware that I have a great repugnance to the wiles and machinations of that girl? *(Aside)* Great guns, how I did want to hug her! *(Aloud)* I do believe you were setting a trap for me.

Mrs. Timkins—Are you crazy?

Timkins—Mrs. T., you have asked that question more than once during the past hour. No! Maria, I am not crazy, but I am strongly of the opinion you are.

Mrs. Timkins—Timpkins!

Timkins—What's the matter with you, Mrs. T.? What's got into you? One time I'm sick, and require change; the next, I'm mad. What's got into you? I tell you what it is *(seizes her hand)*, that infernal humbug, Dr. Pills, has got into you, Mrs. Timkins. He owes me a spite, and he has crammed your head with the idea that I'm mad. Ha! ha! mad! Oh! Maria, if I only had Dr. Pills before me at this moment!

Dr. Pills (Looking over the screen.) Oh, dear me!

Timkins—If I only had that consummate humbug here! If I only had these fingers in his hair, I'd make a door-mat of him. I would show you, Mrs. T., how your Timkins can punch another man's head when occasion requires it. *(At this moment a loud sneeze is heard behind the screen.)*

Mrs. Timkins—Oh !!

Timkins—Hillo ! What's that ?

Mrs. Timkins—Hush ! Not a word !

Timkins—Well, by ——

Mrs. Timkins (in a whisper)—Not a word !

Timkins—Now Maria, I ——

Mrs. Timkins (holds up her finger, and in a whisper)—Hush ! don't move—don't stir ; it is Susan ; she has been listening at the key-hole ; strong draught—made her sneeze ; but I'll surprise her. (*Springs to door and partly opens it, looks out and points her finger.*) Ah ! you bad girl, I have caught you. (*Returning to Timkins*) Timkins, that girl will not remain another hour in the house. Expecting you were here complaining about her, she has been listening, and her sin has found her out.

Timkins—Maria, that girl must have a very bad cold.

Mrs. Timkins—A dispensation of Providence.

Timkins—A dispensation of snuff. If I hadn't your word for it, I'd swear there was only one person on earth could sneeze like that ; namely, our particular friend, Dr. Pills.

Dr. Pills (looking over screen)—Oh ! dear me !

Mrs. Timkins—Timkins, you have Pills upon the brain.

Timkins—Much better than somewhere else, my dear.

Mrs. Timkins—Timkins, you are unbearable ; but, my dear, go and finish your packing ; you will certainly miss the first train. Where have you made up your mind to go to, my dear Timkins ?

Timkins—To relieve General Gordon at Khartoum. (*Exit.*)

Mrs. Timkins—Oh, he is mad !

Dr. Pills (looking out from behind screen, and in a whisper)—Has he gone ?

Mrs. Timkins—Dr. Pills, what possessed you ?

Dr. Pills—Snuff, Mrs. Timkins (*holding out his snuff-box*). The extreme delicacy of my position ; the evident danger I was placed in, required me to do something ; I took a pinch of snuff ; took too much ; did my best to control my sensitive nerves, but the consequence was a louder sneeze than usual. Oh, dear me, I thought it was all up with me.

Mrs. Timkins—You were very imprudent ; but no time is to be lost ; he may return. You must not remain here a moment.

Dr. Pills—My dear Mrs. Timkins, the sooner I'm out of here the better.

Mrs. Timkins—Before you go, what is your opinion of my poor husband ?

Dr. Pills—That on his return we will obtain the necessary certificate and lodge him in a place where he will do no harm to any one, myself included.

Mrs. Timkins—I feared this result ; poor Timkins. Come, Dr. Pills, I'll see you safely to the door. (*Exit.*)

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SCENE II.

Willesden Junction Railway Station—enter TIMKINS carrying a black valise which he deposits on the platform.

Timkins—Well! here I am on my way to the country; Mrs. T. was right; I require a change; Great guns, what I have gone through during the past few weeks. How a man retired from business with a decent income could have been so infatuated as to gamble on the Stock Exchange, I cannot understand; but this is what I have been doing; and what will Mrs. T. say, when she hears about it; What will she do if she ever learns that I dropped no less than ten thousand pounds in one week. Dr. Pills is sure to hear about it, and he will as surely tell Maria; but if he does—if he does, I'll—I'll make a powder of him; I'll grind him into snuff, and Pills will take a pinch of himself. Oh! that Stock Exchange; talk of gambling hells, cards and dice are flea-bites to Stock gambling; don't I know it from bitter experience. Reform Monaco, say they; reform nearer home, say I. I'd blow my brains out, only it is such a disagreeable alternative. I prefer going to the country; but where 'll I go? Maria suggested Scotland—Wales; but no! I'll go to Ireland. I'll go in for freedom. Hillo! there, porter, I say.

Enter Railway Porter.

Timkins—Say, my man, when does the Holyhead express leave.

Porter (looking at clock)—Fifty-four and three quarters of a minute from now.

Timkins—Really to the minute.

Porter—To a tick.

Timkins—By Jove; take my valise till I get something to eat and something (*winks*) to drink.

(Porter touches hat and lifts valise.)

(Exit TIMKINS.)

Enter SIMKINS carrying a black valise the exact counterpart of the one left by TIMKINS with the Porter.)

Simkins—Porter! Porter! Great Caesar! there never is a porter about when you want him. (*Observes Porter.*) Ah! there you are. When does the next train leave for Addison Road?

Porter (looking at clock)—In four minutes and two-thirds of a second.

Simkins—Never behind time?

Porter—Never.

Simkins (looks at clock)—Clock right?

Porter—Never wrong.

Simkins.—Could I purchase that timepiece?

Porter.—Don't know; ask the Station Master.

Simkins.—Young man, you were made for better things than a Railway

Porter; take my valise till I get my ticket.

(*Porter touches his hat and takes valise.*) (*Exit SIMKINS.*)

Porter.—Well, here's a go! (*holding out a valise in each hand.*) Now, I'd like to know which is which (*places them on platform, moves them about one at a time, from one place to another*); like as two p's. and I'm blowed if I know which valise belongs to which gentleman; no mark, no name, and they do make valises so much alike now-a-days.

Enter SIMKINS.

Simkins (looking at clock).—Three minutes before the train goes. Ah! just time to look at Jones's letter once more (*fumbles in his pockets*). What a joke—what a lark! In search of my counterpart; and, then, my old grandmother she must give me a clock, a hundred years old she said, and desired me to get it mended while I was in London. Now, what's the use of mending a thing a hundred years old—one would think its time had run down; but, there it is in my valise and it must be mended. (*Pulls letter from pocket.*) Ah, here it is! let me read this extraordinary document again. (*Produces letter and reads aloud.*)

“My Dear Simkins,

“I have frequently written to you about the astonishing resemblance you bear to a certain Mr. Timkins who resides at No. 0, Russell Road. You two ought certainly to meet each other. Unless it is the mole under your right arm——”

Simkins.—Ah! *Smith and I once bathed together, hence his knowledge of my little imperfections.* (*Continues reading from the letter.*)

“You and Timkins are exactly alike. I never saw such a resemblance. Some day one of you will be taken for the other, which may cause an unpleasantness, and I therefore think you and Timkins should meet and have an explanation. Come to London; present yourself at his house unannounced; break in upon him like an apparition; the effect will be everlasting. You have his address, take my advice.

“Ever yours,

“TIMOTHY JONES.”

Simkins.—Now did you ever hear of such a thing? Timkins and Simkins; only a letter dividing us; so near and yet so far apart. Well, I'm taking Jones's advice; I'll burst in upon this Timkins; I'll astonish him; I'll unravel this mystery. My counterpart and I must certainly come to an understanding; it is necessary that I should see this Timkins with my own eyes. Ah! here is the train. Porter, my valise! (*Porter, who in meantime has been puzzling himself over the resemblance of the two valises, hands one to Simkins.*)

Train arrives, stops, and then passes on in front of station, and discovers PORTER alone on platform carrying one valise.

(Enter TIMKINS smoking cigar.)

Timkins—Ha! ha! the first instalment of my lark; two brandies neat, one brandy and soda, two sandwiches and a cigar, and such a deuced pretty little girl behind the bar. Wouldn't Maria be jealous? *(Observes Porter.)* Ah! Porter, there you are. Is this the platform for the Holyhead express?

Porter—Oh! no sir; you go up that stairs; then you turn to your right; go along a passage; first turning to your left; over a bridge; turn to your left again; down another stairs; then go along platform; take last door to your right; up stairs again; and turn to your left; and——

Timkins—This is Willesden Junction, I believe *(fumbling in his waistcoat pocket)*—Willesden muddle, I should say. Just wait a-bit till I take it all down; but, I say, Porter, I'll give you a sixpence to show me the way.

Porter—All right, sir. *(Suddenly looks at the valise he holds.)* What's this? *(Places valise on platform, kneels, and places his ear close to it.)*

Porter *(looking up)*—Tick, tick, tick! What have you got in here?

Timkins—What have I got?—clothes, of course.

Porter *(rising and starting back from valise)*—Explosive, by thunder! *(rushes off stage.)*

Timkins—What the devil is the matter with the man?

Enter Porter, with Inspector and Policeman.

Porter *(pointing to valise)*—There it is.

Inspector *(to Timkins)*—Is that your valise?

Timkins—I should say it was.

Inspector—Will you be good enough to open it?

Timkins—Are you a custom-house officer?

Inspector—No, sir, but all the same; it is necessary for me to see the contents of this valise, and that immediately.

Porter *(in alarm)*—Yes, immediately; the devilish thing may go off.

Timkins—Well, sir, I'll be hanged if I open my valise for you or any other man.

Inspector—Policeman, do your duty. *(To Porter)*—Tom, break it open. *(Policeman collars TIMKINS.)*

Timkins—Hands off! Are you all mad? Great guns! What the devil do you mean?

Porter *(to Inspector)*—Open the blessed thing yourself; suppose it should go off *(walks to end of stage).*

Timkins—Don't break it open; here is the key *(produces key).*

Inspector (taking key, opens valise, and discloses the works of a clock, pair of trousers, two collars, shirt, tooth-brush, brush and comb, a box of tooth powder, and bottle of hair wash; lays clock, tooth-powder and hair wash on platform)—(Holding up clock)—Mechanical contrivance—(Holding up box tooth-powder)—Box labelled tooth-powder—(Holding up bottle hair wash)—Liquid labelled hair wash. A very suspicious lot of articles! We will send them to Colonel Majendie; in meantime, Policeman, do your duty.

Policeman—You are my prisoner.

Timkins (amazed)—But, wait a-bit, these articles do not belong to me.

Inspector—Too late, sir—too late. You certainly claimed the valise.

Timkins (perplexed)—Well, yes; but where the devil did the clock come from, and these other articles?

Inspector—That will be for you to explain at the proper time.

Policeman—Come along, sir!

Timkins (in a rage, smashing his hat over his eyes)—I'll be hanged if I go (throws himself on platform. Porter, Inspector and Policeman seize him, and carry him off, struggling and shouting.)

Timkins—You'll pay for this, every one of you! Oh, Maria! Oh, Maria! see what you have brought me to! (Exeunt.)

Enter Porter.

Porter—Wonder if they have the right man; two valises just alike; two men also alike—one goes to London; one to Ireland. Oh! well it's not my fault if people will not address their luggage properly. (Exit.)

Enter TIMKINS with his clothes torn and halless, who rushes across the stage followed by Policeman, then by Inspector, then by Porter.

(Exeunt.)

Curtain drops.

SCENE III.

Drawing-room in TIMKINS'S House. SIMKINS discovered, seated, with his thumbs in his waistcoat armholes.

Simkins—And so this is the abode of Timkins. This counterpart of mine is evidently a man of taste (*looks about him*). How very unfortunate, however, that he should be away from home! But here I am, and here I intend to remain until I have seen Timkins. Deuced pretty servant maid that of his. Couldn't help it—had to—had to kiss her. And she—well she didn't seem to object. I wonder if Timkins is in the habit of kissing her. It is true she said she'd tell her mistress, but they all say that and never do it. Mrs. Timkins, too, it appears is absent from home. So, having purchased an evening paper, I'll make myself comfortable. (*Takes a newspaper from his pocket, opens it, crosses his legs, and commences to read.*) Hillo! another dynamite scare. Great Cæsar! what is this? (*Reads from paper*) "*Discovery of an Infernal Machine! Attempt to blow up Willesden Junction Station! Arrest of the Dynamitard!—Last evening a stranger, who refused to give his name, was arrested at Willesden Junction, having in his possession a black valise, containing, amongst other articles, a curiously contrived piece of clockwork, a box labelled tooth-powder, and a phial containing some strange compound marked hair-wash. The valise with its contents were taken possession of and forwarded to Colonel Majendie for inspection, and the stranger was detained pending the necessary inquiries. There is no doubt in the minds of the authorities that another dastardly attempt to destroy life and property has been frustrated.*"

Simkins—This is very singular!—last evening—a black valise—antiquated clock-work—a box, labelled tooth-powder, and a bottle of hair-wash—and at Willesden Junction, too! One would almost suppose my valise had been overhauled. (*Rises and rings bell.*)

Enter SUSAN.

Simkins—My dear little girl—what a charming little creature!—I declare I cannot help it. (*Kisses SUSAN.*)

Susan—Mr. Timkins, you are a very bad man—the next thing you'll do you'll tell mistress I've been rummaging your things.

Simkins—Oh! oh! oh! (*Aside*). She takes me for Timkins. Oh! Timkins, you wretch! Oh! you sly dog! (*Aloud*) My dear, you can rummage my things as much as you like, and I'll never say a word about it.

Susan—I don't believe you. Oh! I know you better.

Simkins—Better than I know you, it seems. Come, now, what is your name, my pretty little dear?

Susan (aside)—Oh! he doesn't remember my name; he's very far gone, but I'll humour him. (*Aloud*) Susan!

Simkins—What a pretty name ! Well, Susan, will you have my valise brought here ?

Susan—Your valise has been sent to your room.

Simkins—Will you oblige me by having it sent here ?

Susan (aside)—Till mistress comes I must humour him. (*Aloud*) Oh ! yes sir, John will bring it immediately.

Simkins—Oh ! you dear little Susan ! (*Catches her round the waist, and attempts to kiss her.*)

Susan (struggling to release herself)—Please, sir, don't.

Mrs. Alljoy (appears at door and perceives the struggle)—Ahem ! (*louder*) ahem ! (*louder still, with a stamp of the foot*) ahem !

Simkins (releasing Susan, who runs off)—Great Cæsar ! here is Mrs. Timkins.

Mrs. Alljoy (aside)—Oh ! what a darling man he is ! so full of fun ; so gallant ! Oh ! how I envy Mrs. Timkins !

Simkins (sheepishly)—Excuse me, madam, but the fact is, Susan—the fact is—I can assure you—the fact is—

Mrs. Alljoy laughs and shakes her finger at SIMKINS.

Simkins (aside)—By Jove, she's a jolly party ! (*Aside*) The truth of the matter is—

Mrs. Alljoy—Don't apologise ; you were merely having a little fun, Mr. Timkins.

Simkins—My dear madam—Simkins.

Mrs. Alljoy—Oh, you funny man ! when did you change your name ?

Simkins (aside)—Oh, here it is, again ; she takes me for Timkins. (*Aloud*) Excuse me, madam, but are you Mrs. Timkins ?

Mrs. Alljoy (aside)—Oh, that I were ! (*Aloud*) Alas, no ! I am Mrs. Alljoy, as you are perfectly aware, Mr. Timkins.

Simkins—Allow me to correct you once more—Simkins, madam.

Mrs. Alljoy (aside)—What's got into the man ? (*Aloud*) Oh, you joker ! so your name is not Timkins.

Simkins—Some people say it is ; in my opinion it is not.

Mrs. Alljoy (aside)—Oh ! he's clean out of his wits. (*Aloud*) What will your wife say ?

Simkins—Haven't a wife.

Mrs. Alljoy—And pray, Mr. Timkins, when did she die.

Simkins (angrily)—She never was born, I tell you.

Mrs. Alljoy (aside) (seating herself on sofa)—Oh ! I see now, poor man—he has been drinking. Poor fellow ! Would that what he says were true ! would that he were free, that I, poor unhappy woman, might cast myself into his arms and tell him of my great, my silent love ! but, no—it cannot be. Alas ! Mrs. Timkins is a stern reality.

Simkins—I tell you what it is, Mrs. Oh-be-joyful, it strikes me the sooner I get out of this house, the better.

Enter MRS. TIMKINS.

Mrs. Timkins (aside)—Timkins, back ; and that woman here !

Mrs. Alljoy (rising quickly from sofa)—Oh ! Mrs. Timkins, I am so glad you have returned ! Here is Timkins, says his name is Simkins, that he hasn't a wife, that she never was born, and that the sooner he is out of this house the better.

Mrs. Timkins (haughtily)—If my husband said all you impute to him, I should say the sooner he is out of the house the better it will be for himself.

Simkins (aside)—Oh ! ho ! here is the original and only Mrs. Timkins ; now, by Jove, I'm in for it !

Mrs. Alljoy (in a whisper to Mrs. T.)—I am afraid, Mrs. Timkins, your husband is not quite himself.

Mrs. Timkins (savagely)—And I am afraid, Mrs. Alljoy, you are concerning yourself in matters that do not belong to you.

Mrs. Alljoy (aside and in a temper)—Oh ! the jealous tiger ! she knows that Timkins has a partiality for me. (*Aloud*) I am very sorry, Mrs. Timkins ; I had no intention of offending you.

Mrs. Timkins—There is nothing you could say would offend me, Mrs. Alljoy. (*Turning to Simkins*) Where on earth did you get that suit of clothes ?

Simkins (Looking at himself)—Clothes ! clothes ! why, from my tailor, of course.

Mrs. Timkins—And you ordered them without consulting my taste ? the pattern is positively vulgar.

Simkins—Thank you, madam ; now in my town this suit of clothes is considered rather nobby.

Mrs. Timkins—In your town ! Pray where is that ?

Simkins—Simkinville in Shropshire ; named after my family, madam.

Mrs. Alljoy—There, I told you so—he insists that his name is Simkins.

Mrs. Timkins (aside)—This is simply dreadful—my poor husband ! But stay, a happy thought—that dreadful woman, Mrs. Alljoy. I will make use of her, no matter how repugnant it may be to my feelings. Dr. Pills and his two friends will be here presently for a consultation. Timkins must be got out of the way ; I will make use of Mrs. Alljoy for the purpose. (*To Mrs. Alljoy, in a whisper*) I regret if I spoke hastily a moment ago ; I am very much worried about Timkins' health. The doctors will be here presently for a consultation on his case. It is desirable that my husband should not be present. I will make an excuse for you to accompany him to the library. Will you engage his attention there for the next half-hour ?

Mrs. Alljoy—With all my heart.

Mrs. Timkins (aside)—I have evidently given *her* a pleasant task.

Simkins (aside)—These women are playing at cross-purposes; what's in the wind?

Mrs. Timkins—Dear Timkins, pray show Mrs. Alljoy your new portrait in the library.

Simkins—Pleasure, madam. (*Aside*) Oh, oh, oh! my portrait! but—
(*Aloud to MRS. ALLJOY, offering his arm*) Come along, madam, I have no doubt we'll find our way.

Mrs. Alljoy (aside, going out on SIMKINS' arm)—What a golden opportunity! (*Exit MRS. ALLJOY and SIMKINS.*)

Mrs. Timkins—It is about time for Dr. Pills to be here (*looks at her watch*). Yes, just the hour.

Enter SUSAN.

Susan—Dr. Pills, madam.

Mrs. Timkins—How punctual!

Enter DR. PILLS and his two professional friends, DRS. CRACKBRAIN and GONEUP. (*Exit Susan.*)

Mrs. Timkins (Meeting and shaking hands with Dr. Pills)—Ah! doctor, always punctual.

Dr. Pills—Always punctual, madam. (*Takes book out and makes memo.*) My friends, Mrs. Timkins, Drs. Crackbrain and Goneup.

Mrs. Timkins—Pray be seated! (*Points to chairs, and they all take seats.*) Your arrival, gentlemen, is quite opportune, Mr. Timkins has unexpectedly returned.

Dr. Pills (in alarm)—Timkins here! Mrs. Timkins, to say the least of it, it is extremely injudicious.

Mrs. Timkins—Don't be alarmed, doctor; I have taken precautions that our consultation shall not be disturbed.

Dr. Pills—No more screens—for me, Mrs. Timkins.

Mrs. Timkins—No more screens, Dr. Pills. Gentlemen, it is a very sad case when a wife has to consult you on matters relating to her husband's state of mind; but I am induced to do so only because I hope that I may be able to avert a greater calamity.

Dr. Pills (aside)—She dwells upon Timkins, and (*passes his finger across his throat*).

Mrs. Timkins—My husband for some time has been acting very strangely, and only to-day denied his identity altogether.

Drs. Pills, Crackbrain, and Goneup (holding up their hands together)
—A very hard case, indeed, madam.

Dr. Pills—Just what I said—a very hard case.

Enter SIMKINS, flourishing his hat.

Simpkins—My dear Mrs Timkins, congratulate me.

Dr. Pills—(rising precipitately from his seat)—Oh, dear me, Timkins !
(Rushes from stage.)

(*Drs. CRACKBRAIN and GONEUP rise from their seats.*)

Simpkins—(looking in direction of *Dr. Pills' flight*)—Hillo ! What is the matter with him ?

Mrs. Timkins—Timkins !

Simpkins (rushing forward and seizing her hands).—Simkins, my dear madam—not Timkins. But congratulate me—congratulate me, my dear madam ! I have captured the widow. Mrs. Oh-be-joyful has promised to be mine. We are to be married the week after my old grandmother dies.

Mrs. Timkins (to *Drs. Crackbrain and Goneup*)—Gentlemen, listen to him. My husband has the audacity to tell me—his wife—that he is going to marry another woman. What greater proof can there be of his insanity ?

Dr. Crackbrain (holding up his finger at *Mrs. Timkins*).—Madam, leave him to us. (To *Simkins*) Mr. Timkins.

Simpkins—Dem it, how often am I to tell you my name is Simkins ? Timkins is my counterpart ; don't you understand ?

Dr. Crackbrain—Do you mean to say, then, that this lady (pointing to *Mrs. Timkins*) is not your wife ?

Simpkins—Of course I do ! Never was married in my life. You see—let me explain. I am an orphan, father and mother both dead ; but my father's mother, my grandmother, survives. She—you see—she took a ninety-nine years' lease of life. Now, the old lady has a nice little sum in her own right (some thirty thousand pounds) to which I am the acknowledged heir if I don't marry during her lifetime. She is particular on this point, and thirty thousand pounds is a nice little sum.

Mrs. Timkins—What rubbish !

Simkins—Well, now, I don't think so. At least I mean to get it if I can, and the old lady cannot last long, and then—and then Mrs. Oh-be-joyful has promised to be mine.

Enter MRS. ALLJOY, in confusion.

Mrs. Alljoy—Oh, Mrs Timkins ! what could I do ? He made desperate love to me, became quite excited, and, to quiet him, I agreed to his very ridiculous proposition.

Simpkins (reproachfully)—Mrs. Oh-be-joyful, this is not kind of you !

Dr. Crackbrain to *Dr. Goneup*—A most peculiar case ! I think we should take immediate steps. (Whisper to each other.) (To *Mrs. Timkins*)—We will return presently, armed with the necessary documents. His case requires immediate treatment. Detain him till our return.
(*Ereunt.*)

Mrs. Timkins—My dear Timkins, why will you persist in making yourself ridiculous?—what is the matter with you?

Simkins—Great Caesar! there is nothing the matter with me. You will persist in calling me Timkins, when I tell you my name is Simkins. Where the devil is Timkins?

Mrs. Timkins—Oh! this is dreadful! (*Puts her handkerchief to her eyes and sobs.*)

Mrs. Alljoy—I declare the whole affair is very extraordinary. I fear, indeed, the man is mad. (*Goes to Mrs. Timkins and endeavours to console her.*)

Simkins (walks about excitedly) (aside)—Things are getting decidedly mixed. I hate to leave the widow, but she, too, thinks I'm Timkins! Why the devil, then, did she promise to marry me? Oh, that Timkins would make his appearance; I have a strong foreboding that I am getting into trouble. (*Aloud to Mrs. T.*) Madam, I think I have been here long enough. I will call another day upon Timkins. Tell him, when he returns, that his counterpart was here to see him. (*To Mrs. Alljoy*) Mrs. Oh-be-joyful, you'll hear from me—remember I keep you to your promise. Adieu, ladies. (*Puts his hat on and goes towards door.*)

Enter DR. CRACKBRAIN and GONEUP, with two attendants, who confront SIMKINS.

Dr. Crackbrain—Mr. Timkins, a little rest and quiet will do you good. (*To Mrs. T.*) Mrs. Timkins, your husband will be tenderly treated. (*To Simkins*) Come, Mr. Timkins.

Simkins—One moment, gentlemen. Once more, my name is Simkins. I entered this house by mistake. I apologise; can't do more. Allow me to pass. Good morning, ladies!

(*DR. CRACKBRAIN waves to attendants, who take SIMKINS by the arms.*)

Simkins—Great Caesar! what do you mean? Hands off—or you will see what a Simkins can do! (*Attempts to throw off attendants, who seize him.*)

Simkins (shouting)—Great Caesar! I tell you I apologise. I—I—
(*Attendants hurry him from room.*)

Dr. Crackbrain (to Mrs. Timkins)—Your husband will be placed in one of the most comfortable rooms in the asylum. Depend upon it, madam, he will be carefully treated. (*Exit with Dr. Goneup.*)

Mrs. Timkins—Oh, Mrs. Alljoy, this is dreadful! Poor Timkins! (*Handkerchief to eyes and sobs.*)

Mrs. Alljoy—Poor Timkins! (*Also sobs, comfort each other.*)

Enter TIMKINS with clothes torn and hat crushed—walks slowly and gloomily forward.

Timkins—Mrs. Timkins, behold the remains of your husband, the wreck of what was once your Timkins. See (*pointing to his clothes*) the effects of your folly. (*MRS. TIMKINS and MRS. ALLJOY look up and scream, then rush to other end of room and look on Timkins with horror.*)

Mrs. Timkins—Good heavens! they have allowed him to escape!

Timkins (*points his finger at MRS. TIMKINS*)—Ah, remorse! it comes too late. See the condition to which you have brought me through listening to the advice of that very particular friend of mine, Dr. Pills. Ah! Pills, when I change my clothes, I'll have it out with you.

Mrs. Timkins (*in a whisper to MRS. ALLJOY*)—Dear Mrs. Alljoy, go immediately, find Dr. Pills, and tell him Timkins has escaped, and to send assistance at once, or I fear he will murder me.

Mrs. Alljoy (*in a whisper*)—I'll send some one to secure him at once. (*Goes towards door.*)

Timkins (*planting himself before MRS. ALLJOY*)—Mrs. Alljoy! But no—I have no quarrel with you. Go!

(*Mrs. ALLJOY flees from room.*)

Mrs. Timkins—Oh, Timkins! spare me. I did all for the best.

Timkins—All that I can say, madam, is that it turned out very badly for me. Arrested as a dynamitard. Locked up, Mrs. Timkins! Do you hear? Your husband put into jail! What does that mean? Ruin! You insisted upon Susan packing my valise, and what did she put into it? A confounded old clock, a bottle of hair-wash, a box of tooth-powder, and a shirt-collar. A comfortable lot of articles that to go on a journey with.

Mrs. Timkins—Oh, Timkins! there must be some dreadful mistake. Where could Susan get an old clock from?

Timkins—That's what I'd like to know. But there it was, and Susan packed my valise, and here (*pointing to his clothes*) you see the effect of it.

Mrs. Timkins—(*aside*) I declare he's seized with another fancy. But how on earth did he change his clothes so quickly? I believe I am going crazy myself.

(*Enter MRS. ALLJOY, who goes to MRS. TIMKINS, and whispers.*)

Mrs. Alljoy—I didn't lose a moment. I met Dr. Crackbrain, who was quite dismayed at Timkins' escape. The attendants will be here immediately to secure him.

Timkins—Well, Mrs. Alljoy, what brought you back again? Do you delight to look upon my misery?

Mrs. Alljoy—No, Mr. Timkins, I would like to alleviate it.

Enter Attendants.

Timkins—Now then—what do you want here?

First Attendant—I think we want you—come along, now—come along!

(*Attendants seize TIMKINS.*)

Timkins—Great guns! Arrested again! I appeal to British justice! I was discharged? You cannot arrest me the second time on the same charge! Dem if I'll go! (*Throws himself on floor.*)

(*Attendants seize TIMKINS and carry him off shouting.*)

Timkins—Oh! Mrs. Timkins! Oh, Maria! I'll make you and Pills pay for this! It is a vile conspiracy. (*Exeunt.*)

Curtain drops.

SCENE IV.

(*Room in lunatic asylum, with corridor, door between, arranged with sliding panel for looking into room. SIMKINS discovered in room, clothes torn, and in a very dilapidated condition.*)

Simkins—A pretty ending this to my holiday—locked up in a lunatic asylum! The next thing will be a straight jacket! Confound Jones! it is all his fault. I don't believe there is such a man as Timkins; the whole thing is a delusion and a snare. A practical joke on the part of my friend Jones. But oh, Jones! Oh, Timothy Jones! (*shakes his fist in the air*) wait till I get out. I'll break in upon you like an apparition, I will—and (*solemnly*) the effect will be everlasting. Great Caesar! my grandmother will cut me off with a shilling when she hears of this. But what can I do? the more I protest—the more I insist that I am Simkins—the more they are convinced that I am Timkins, and the madder they declare me to be. A pretty kettle of fish, isn't it? If I appeal to the Home Secretary they'll never deliver my letter; I can't appeal to my grandmother; what am I to do? Here I am, and here I'm likely to remain unless Timkins turns up. Where, in thunder, is Timkins? He alone is my hope; should he never appear then I am undone. Great Caesar, how thirsty I am! (*Knocks on the door—listens, finding no answer.*) Pleasant place this to stay in!—attentive waiters! (*looks about room*) luxurious furniture! I'd like to know how long this thing is going to last. Hsh! somebody's coming (*listens*).

(*Enter in corridor TIMKINS, dragged by the two Attendants and accompanied by Dr. LOONEY.*)

Timkins—I protest against this outrage. I know nothing about the confounded clock. Never used hair wash in my life—never.

(*Struggles with Attendants.*)

Dr. Looney (*fumbling in his pocket*)—I declare this is very odd—most

singular—never had a patient of mine escape before, once I had him under lock and key. Ah! here it is (*takes key from pocket and thrusts it into keyhole of door*).

Timkins—I tell you the cursed old clock don't belong to me. I don't use that kind of tooth powder. I appeal—

Dr. Looney opens door and Attendants thrust TIMKINS into room.

Dr. Looney (after he has closed the door on TIMKINS)—John! John! this is a dreadful disgrace on our establishment! it is ruinous! How on earth did the patient escape?

1st Attendant—Very mysterious, sir! give it up.

2nd Attendant—Crept through the keyhole, I should say.

Dr. Looney—I am afraid he crept through the door because you neglected to lock it. But I'll make sure of it this time (*tries key in lock, and withdrawing it places it in his pocket*). Now, John, we will leave the patient for the present; go to your supper (*exeunt*).

(*In meantime TIMKINS and SIMKINS walk round and round the room, eyeing each other in amazement.*)

Simkins—Great Cæsar!

Timkins—Great guns!

Simkins—Timkins?

Timkins—And you?

Simkins—Simkins.

Timkins—By thunder!

(*Shake hands and confer together.*)

(*Enter in corridor Mrs. TIMKINS, Mrs. ALLJOY, Dr. PILLS, and Dr. LOONEY.*)

Mrs. Timkins—My poor Timkins!

Mrs. Alljoy—Poor Timkins!

Dr. Pills (to Dr. Looney)—Is he very violent?

Dr. Looney—Somewhat. Perhaps you would like to see for yourself?

Dr. Pills—No, thank you; I've seen enough of him. Oh, no, Dr. Looney! I'll take your word for it.

Timkins—Hush! Something going on outside (*they both listen at door.*)

Dr. Looney—Don't be alarmed, doctor! You see (*pointing to the panel*) I have a plan by which I can examine my patients without entering the room.

Dr. Pills—Oh! then, that alters the question. I should certainly, in that case, like to see the patient.

Mrs. Timkins—My poor Timkins!

Mrs. Alljoy—Poor Timkins !

Dr. Pills—Poor devil ! (*Aside*) I can't say I am sorry for him.

(*Dr. LOONEY pull aside panel, and Dr. PILLS looks through.*)

Timkins (*perceiving him*)—Pills ! you double-dyed, snuff-taking scoundrel !

(*Gesticulates and apparently talks excitedly to SIMPKINS. Dr. PILLS shuts panel hastily, and seizing Dr. LOONEY by the arm, draws him to one side.*)

Dr. Pills—Dr. Looney, what is the meaning of this ? You have two patients in there.

Dr. Looney—Dr. Pills, you are mad !

Mrs. Timkins—What on earth is the matter now ?

Mrs. Alljoy—I don't know, but the doctors appear to be at logger-heads.

Dr. Pills—The matter is, madam, that you have two husbands in there.

Mrs. Timkins (*screams*)—Oh ! you wretch !

Mrs. Alljoy—Good gracious !

Dr. Pills—I think it is about time for me to leave ; there is evidently something wrong. (*Exit.*)

Dr. Looney—Very extraordinary ! but I will see for myself (*pushes panel aside and looks into room, shuts it again hastily*).

Dr. Looney (*to Mrs. TIMKINS*)—Madam, some dreadful mistake has happened ; there are certainly two patients in there when there should be only one. Perhaps you had better see for yourself (*pushes panel aside and points to opening*).

(*Mrs. TIMKINS looks in.*)

Timkins—Great guns, Maria !

Mrs. Timkins—My poor Timkins !

Timkins—I should say so ; very poor (*looks at his torn clothes*)—miserably poor ! I hope you are satisfied, Mrs. Timkins.

Mrs. Timkins—But, Timkins, who—who is that ?

Simkins—Simkins, madam, at your service.

Mrs. Alljoy (*pulling Mrs. TIMKINS by the dress*)—Please, Mrs. Timkins, may I have a peep ?

Mrs. Timkins (*leaving panel*)—Dr. Looney, what is the meaning of all this ?

Dr. Looney—I fear some dreadful mistake has happened.

Mrs. Alljoy (*looks through panel*)—Oh, dear !

Simkins—Great Cæsar ! Mrs. Oh-be-joyful !

Mrs. Alljoy—How funny !

Simkins—Very, very funny ! eh, *Timkins* ? (*pokes TIMKINS in the ribs.*)
But look here, *Mrs.* Oh-be-joyful ! if you'll only get me out of
here, I'll marry you to-morrow in spite of my grandmother.

Mrs. Alljoy—Oh ! what a man ? (*Leaves panel.*)

Mrs. Timkins (to Dr. Looney)—It is evident, *Dr. Looney*, that a great
mistake has been made. I should like to have an interview with
my husband.

Dr. Looney—A very desirable step, madam ; and I trust you will not
forget to explain that I am in no way responsible for his confine-
ment. The certificate seemed to be quite in order.

Mrs. Timkins—I will certainly endeavour to explain everything.

Mrs. Alljoy (aside) And I wouldn't be in her place for anything.

Dr. Looney—Then I will open the door. (*Produces key, places it in the
lock.*) (*Aside.*) And now, I think, I had better go and consult my
solicitor. (*Throws open door and exit hurriedly.*)

Mrs. Timkins (entering room, followed by Mrs. Alljoy)—Oh ! forgive
me, *Timkins* ! How I have suffered ?

Timkins—Suffered, have you ? Forgive you ? Well, I'll think about
that, *Maria* !

Simkins (aside to Timkins, poking him in the side)—Now's your chance.
Give her a bit of your mind !

Mrs. Alljoy (aside)—Oh ! isn't he angry ?

Timkins (aside to Simkins)—*Simkins* don't interrupt me. I think I'm
equal to the occasion. (*To Mrs. Timkins*) *Maria*, I once more
express the hope that you are satisfied. I trust the sight of your
husband in his present condition (*points to his torn clothes*) consoles
you. I should say that you and your precious adviser, *Dr. Pills*,
have had your money's worth.

Simkins (poking Timkins in the ribs, whispers)—Hotter, hotter !

Timkins (To Simkins)—Just you wait, I'm only warming up.

Mrs. Timkins—Oh ! *Timkins* don't be too hard upon me.

Timkins—Madam, in all such matters there comes a time of reckoning ;
that time has come, and now I'd like to know, *Mrs. Timkins*,
what you are going to do about it.

Mrs. Alljoy—Oh ! isn't she getting it.

Simkins (to Mrs. Timkins)—British subjects, madam, without reason,
confined in a madhouse.

Timkins—Fictitious and malicious certificates on the part of your
medical advisers, madam.

Simkins—There will be questions asked in Parliament, madam.

Timkins—And, *Maria*, if I ever lay my hands on that infernal scoundrel,
Dr. Pills, there will be a murder committed—that's all.

Mrs. Timkins—I will have nothing more to do with *Pills*.

Timkins—Quite right. A perfect fraud.

Simkins—Excuse me—one exception—Cockles; I've always found Cockles' very——

Mrs. Alljoy—Oh, this is too absurd!

(*Mr. & Mrs. Timkins laugh heartily.*)

Simkins—What on earth are you all laughing at? I tell you what, Cockles' Pills are——

Timkins—Excellent; but, my dear fellow, we are referring to Dr. Pills.

Simkins—And I believe Cockles' are better than any doctor's pills; my grandmother——

Timkins—Oh, confound it, stop! we're not sick.

Simkins—I am, and I'd like to go home.

Mrs. Timkins—Won't you forgive me, Timkins? I am very sorry. Come home; I've had a lesson I'll never forget.

Timkins—Well, Maria, I'm of a forgiving disposition. There, I forgive you (*kisses her*). I don't blame you so much; but there will be a case, Timkins and Simkins *versus* Pills, and then we'll see what'll come of it, eh, Simkins?

Simkins—Certainly (*to Mrs. ALLJOY.*) Mrs. Oh-be-joyful!

Mrs. Alljoy—Mrs. Alljoy if you please.

Simkins—Well, Mrs. Alljoy, do you remember your promise?

Mrs. Alljoy (aside)—Well, I suppose it is the nearest approach to Timkins I can get. They are as like as two P's. (*Aloud*) If you are still of the same mind?

Simkins—I am (*throws his arms round Mrs. ALLJOY and kisses her*). What will my old grandmother say?

(*TIMKINS throws his arms round Mrs. TIMKINS and kisses her.*)

CURTAIN DROPS.

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